

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.- 10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) The ~~method system~~ of claim [[9]] 46 wherein the information associated with ~~said each respective mail piece~~ the mail pieces comprises a required postage amount.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9 system of claim 47~~ wherein the one or more characteristics of the recipient are selected from the group consisting of:

the recipient's age;
the recipient's sex;
the recipient's occupation; and
the recipient's location.

15. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9 system of claim 46~~ wherein the postage evidencing system is operable to print a plurality of postage labels wherein a single image is printed on [[a]] the plurality of valid postage labels; and wherein the plurality of valid postage labels are printed with indicia representing at least two different postage amounts.

16. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9 system of claim 46~~ wherein the postage evidencing system is operable to print a plurality of valid postage labels wherein postage indicia printed on [[a]] the plurality of valid postage labels represent a single postage amount, and wherein the plurality of valid postage labels are printed with varying images.

17. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9 system of claim 46~~ wherein the postage evidencing system is operable to print a plurality of valid postage labels wherein the postage indicia determined required amount of postage and images printed on the plurality of valid postage labels both vary.

18. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9~~ system of claim 46 the valid postage labels are printed on a printing medium comprising a roll of blank labels that are printed in series, wherein the roll of printed valid postage labels appears to be a roll of postage stamps.

19. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9~~ system of claim 46 the valid postage labels are printed on a printing medium comprising a sheet of blank labels, wherein the sheet of printed valid postage labels appear to be a sheet of postage stamps.

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9~~ system of claim 46 wherein a blank printing medium upon which the valid postage labels are printed comprise a serial number.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9~~ system of claim 20 wherein the printed valid postage label indicia includes ~~the~~ a serial number.

23. (Currently Amended) The ~~method of claim 9~~ system of claim 46 wherein the postage evidencing system is operable to printing step comprises:

~~receiving receive~~ label stock having a pre-printed serial number, the pre-printed serial number including a master serial number;

~~generating generate the valid postage labels an indicium using with~~ the master serial number, pre-printed serial number, and determined required amount of postage required request; and

~~printing print~~ the valid postage label labels comprising the postage stamps indicium on the label stock.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for creating valid postage labels for use on mail pieces, comprising:

~~monitoring a location of mail pieces in a high-speed letter processing system;~~

calculating a postage amount due for each of the mail pieces;

creating valid postage labels associated with each of the mail pieces before the mail pieces arrive at a location comprising a postage indicium applicator;

printing, by a printer on blank labels, the valid postage labels comprising postage indicia corresponding to the postage amount calculated for the mail pieces ~~and comprising images, wherein each of the postage indicia is associated with a particular one of the mail pieces, and wherein said images of at least two of the valid postage labels are not identical;~~

applying, by said high-speed letter processing system, the valid postage labels to the associated mail pieces ~~wherein no human readable portions of said valid postage labels display permit information said associated mail pieces have an appearance of a mail item comprising a postage stamp that was obtained from a delivery service and was applied by hand; and~~

~~coordinating the operation of the postage indicium applicator and the location of the mail pieces to ensure that the correct valid postage labels are applied to each envelope.~~

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 further comprising:

monitoring the quality of the valid postage labels to ensure that the proper postage valid postage labels were printed.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 further comprising:

monitoring the quality of the mail pieces to ensure that the valid postage labels have been properly applied.

27. (Original) The method of claim 24 further comprising:

monitoring the quality of the mail pieces to ensure that the postage indicia represents a proper postage amount.

28. (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the calculating step further comprises:

determining a destination for a mail piece; and

calculating the postage amount based upon the destination of the mail piece.

29. (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the calculating step further comprises:

determining a weight for a mail piece; and
calculating the postage amount based upon the weight of the mail piece.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein each of the postage indicia are associated with a mail piece that is designated for a particular recipient[[;]], and wherein the each of the valid postage labels comprise an image, wherein the image for each valid postage labels is selected based upon one or more characteristics of the associated particular recipient.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31 wherein the one or more characteristics of the recipient are selected from the group consisting of:

the recipient's age;
the recipient's sex;
the recipient's occupation; and
the recipient's location.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the blank labels comprise a roll of blank labels that are printed in series.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the blank labels comprise a sheet of blank labels.

35. (Canceled)

36. (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the blank labels comprise a serial number.

37. (Original) The method of claim 36 further comprising:
verifying that the serial number is valid.

38. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 wherein the printed postage indicia includes the serial number.

39. (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the printing step further comprises:

receiving label stock having a pre-printed serial number, the pre-printed serial number including a master serial number;

generating postage indicia using the master serial number, pre-printed serial number, and required request; and

printing the postage indicia on the label stock.

40. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 further comprising:

~~coordinating the location of the mail pieces and the operation of the postage indicium applicator and a postage evidencing system that creates the valid postage labels to ensure verifying that the correct valid postage labels are applied to each mail piece.~~

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein each of the valid postage labels comprise an image and each of the images is selected based on recipient characteristics of the a particular one of the mail pieces.

42. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
creating a machine generated postage stamp, by a high speed mail item computer processing system, said creating including:

receiving, by the high speed mail item computer processing system, information associated with each of a plurality of the mail pieces, wherein the high speed mail item computer processing system determines a postage amount for each postage indicia to be printed based on the information; and

printing, by a printer, said machine generated postage stamp including a postage indicium and an image, wherein the postage indicium is associated with a particular one of the plurality of mail pieces and bears at least the determined postage amount, and wherein the image is selected based on characteristics of a recipient of the particular one of the plurality of mail pieces; and

affixing the machine generated postage stamp to the mail pieces to provide mail pieces processed by the high speed mail item computer processing system that have the appearance of a mail piece comprising a postage stamp that was obtained from a delivery service and was applied by hand, wherein the machine generated postage stamp is at least two separate labels appearing to be at least two different postage stamps which display postage amounts in increments that are offered by the delivery service and the at least two postage amounts displayed by the at least two separate labels total at least the determined postage amount.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42 wherein at least two of the machine generated postage stamp bear different images and different postage amounts.

44. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 ~~wherein no human readable portions of said valid postage labels display permit information and~~ wherein the valid postage labels display a postage amount in an increment that is available from the delivery service.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42 wherein no human readable portions of said valid postage labels display permit information.

46. (New) An mail processing system comprising:

a controller operable to receive information associated with each respective mail piece of a plurality of mail pieces, wherein the received information is used by the controller to determine a required amount of postage for said each respective mail piece;

a postage evidencing system operable to print a postage label for a particular mail piece of the plurality of mail pieces;

an applicator operable to apply the postage label to the particular mail piece, wherein the postage label comprises at least two postage stamps which display postage amounts that total at least the determined required amount of postage.

47. (New) The system of claim 46 wherein at least one of the two postage stamps comprise an image selected based upon one or more characteristics of a recipient of the particular mail piece.

48. (New) The system of claim 46 further comprising:

quality monitor operable to verify the postage label is properly applied to the particular mail piece.

49. (New) The system of claim 48 wherein the quality monitor is operable to reject the particular mail piece if the postage label is not properly applied.

50. (New) The system of claim 46 wherein the particular mail piece has an appearance of a mail item comprising a mail stamp that was obtained from a delivery service and was applied by hand.